

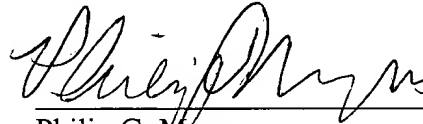
priority. Applicant also filed a non-convention PCT application substantially identical to the present application on July 16, 1999, US99/16204, published as WO 01/05479 on January 25, 2001, now abandoned. All of the prior art cited in the International Search Report is already of record in the U.S. application. If the examiner has any further questions, he should feel free to contact the undersigned attorney by telephone.

It is believed that no additional fees are due. If this is incorrect, please charge any additional fees to deposit account 50-1588.

Applicant has made an earnest effort to place the case in condition for allowance.

Favorable action and passage of the case to issue are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Philip G. Meyers", is written over a horizontal line.

Philip G. Meyers  
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Registration No. 30,478

April 20, 2001

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